

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 PM-09 NSC-10 SS-15 RSC-01 EB-11

AID-20 HEW-08 DPW-01 TRSE-00 OMB-01 COME-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-03 USIA-12 PRS-01 /140 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/ PAB: LBLAINGEN: BK

4/2/73: EXT20353

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S/ S - MR BARNES

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R 042317 Z APR 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY DACCA

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PFOR, BG, PK

SUBJECT: BANGLADESH AMBASSADOR'S CALL ON ACTING SECRETARY

1. SUMMARY: BANGLADESH AMBASSADOR ALI PAID COURTESY CALL
ON ACTING SECRETARY RUSH APRIL 2. LAINGEN AND VELIOTES
SAT IN. ALI EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR U. S. ECONOMIC
ASSISTANCE BANGLADESH AND HOPE FOR CONTINUED U. S. SUPPORT.
REITERATED STANDARD BDG POSITION ON PAK RECOGNITION AND
POW ISSUES. ACTING SECRETARY NOTED OUR SATISFACTION IN
EVOLVING U. S.- BD BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP; EXPRESSED HOPE
SOUTH ASIAN COUNTRIES WOULD FIND BASIS FOR COOPERATION;
BUT NOTED THAT WE DO NOT INTEND TO PROPOSE SOLUTIONS
TO THEIR PROBLEMS. END SUMMARY

2. ACTING SECRETARY TOLD AMBASSADOR ALI WE VERY PLEASED
WITH PRESENT STATE OUR RELATIONS AND FOR OUTLOOK DEVELOPMENT
EVEN STRONGER COMMON UNDERSTANDING. ALI RECIPROCATED THESE
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VIEWS AND WENT ON TO EXPRESS APPRECIATION FOR U. S. ASSISTANCE, ON WHICH HE NOTED BDG PERHAPS NOT ALWAYS EXPLICIT. NONETHELESS, BOTH BDG AND PEOPLE VERY APPRECIATIVE. BDG PARTICULARLY GRATEFUL FOR MANNER IN WHICH AID BEING EXTENDED, INCLUDING LOW PROFILE U. S. PRESENCE, AND FOR PRACTICAL ASSISTANCE IN WORK OF PLANNING COMMISSION AND ELSEWHERE BDG.

3. AMBASSADOR ALI THOUGHT THAT FUTURE SHOULD SEE THIS COOPERATION DEEPEN SINCE BOTH COUNTRIES WERE DEMOCRATIC SOCIETIES, BOTH HAD STRUGGLED FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, AND BD STRONGLY NEEDED U. S. HELP. ACTING SECRETARY NOTED WE ENCOURAGED BY FACT OF STABLE GOVERNMENT BD AND PARTICULARLY OVERWHELMING ELECTORAL VICTORY BY MUJIB. ALI NOTED THAT MUJIB'S STRENGTH WAS INHERENT IN SITUATION IN BD; BENGALIS BELIEVED MUJIB COULD WORK MIRACLES; IF COUNTRY HAD SUPPORT FROM ITS FRIENDS, AMBASSADOR THOUGHT MUJIB COULD GET COUNTRY MOVING EFFECTIVELY.

4. IN RESPONSE ACTING SECRETARY'S QUESTION RE ECONOMIC PROGRESS, ALI REVIEWED ENORMOUS PROBLEMS FACING NEW COUNTRY, FACT THAT ITS PEOPLE'S EXPECTATIONS WERE GROWING RAPIDLY, WHICH COULD CAUSE SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES IN FUTURE IF COUNTRY DID NOT MOVE FORWARD. STRONG ELECTORAL MANDATE RECEIVED BY MUJIB WOULD NOW STRENGTHEN HIS HAND TO TAKE MANY BOLD STEPS THAT WERE NEEDED IN SITUATION WHERE SO MANY BASIC LIMITATIONS Affected OUTLOOK FOR DEVELOPMENT.

5. ACTING SECRETARY ASKED ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR BREAKING NEGOTIATING IMPASSE WITH PAKISTAN, PARTICULARLY ON POW ISSUE. AMBASSADOR RESPONDED WITH STANDARD RECITATION OF BANGLADESH POSITION ON NEED FOR PRIOR RECOGNITION. NOTED THAT PEOPLE OFTEN FORGET THAT PAKISTAN WAS HOLDING POW'S OF ITS OWN; I. E. THE 30-40,000 BENGALIS IN PAK MILITARY FORCES WHO WERE HELD IN VIRTUAL CONCENTRATION CAMP CONDITIONS IN PAKISTAN MILITARY BARRACKS. NOTED ALSO 260,000 BIHARIS IN BANGLADESH WHO HAD OPTED FOR PAKISTAN AND WHOM GOP HAD REJECTED. THESE WERE HUMAN PROBLEMS AS WELL AND THE ONLY OBSTACLE TO THESE ISSUES AND THE POW PROBLEM WAS PAKISTAN RECOGNITION OF THE NEW REALITIES IN SOUTH ASIA. AMBASSADOR ALI RECOGNIZED THAT BHUTTO WAS PREPARING PEOPLE FOR RECOGNITION BUT SAID HE UNABLE TO
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UNDERSTAND WHY RECOGNITION NOT EXTENDED IMMEDIATELY.

6. ACTING SECRETARY REITERATED U. S. POSITION OF FAVORING EARLIEST POSSIBLE PROGRESS IN DISCUSSIONS AMONG SOUTH ASIAN COUNTRIES THAT WOULD LAY BASIS FOR MEANINGFUL COOPERATION AMONG THEM. USG HOWEVER COULD NOT AND WOULD NOT OFFER SOLUTIONS AS TO HOW TO ACCOMPLISH THIS END.

7. AMBASSADOR ALI NOTED FACT THAT ACTING SECRETARY WOULD SHORTLY BE VISITING BD. ACTING SECRETARY RESPONDED WITH EXPRESSION HIS KEEN ANTICIPATION IN SEEING COUNTRY AND TALKING WITH ITS LEADERSHIP ABOUT FUTURE PROSPECTS.
ROGERS

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*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts:
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 APR 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973STATE062466
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: LBLAINGEN: BK
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: n/a
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: SECSTATE WASHDC
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730433/aaaahodi.tel
Line Count: 131
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ORIGIN NE
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <01-Aug-2001 by reddocgw>; APPROVED <08-Jan-2002 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> gwr 971121
Subject: BANGLADESH AMBASSADOR'S CALL ON ACTING
TAGS: PFOR, BG, PK
To: DACCA
ISLAMABAD
LONDON
NEW DELHI
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005